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Weekly Security & Risk Report

21st April 2022



MAST Intelligence

UK Domestic

International Incidents

Industry and SIA Updates

LAND



SEA

West Africa

**Indian Ocean
Yemen, Somalia**

European Waters



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Issue 328

Issue 328 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the conflict-affected coastal states of Somalia and Yemen and associated waters, as well as ongoing issues facing the maritime industry in West Africa. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, security issues facing the UK and incidents affecting maritime security are also reported and analysed.

The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In country reporting on key countries where civil conflicts are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

MAST has a global reach and presence, delivering first hand, accurate and exclusive intelligence. MAST is entrenched and committed in continuing to support and promote the awareness of the very real risks that seafarers and other stakeholders face.

This Intelligence Report Series is a brief snapshot of MAST's Intelligence capabilities. MAST Intelligence specialises in providing clients with a suite of products and services, including; political and economic risk analysis, detailed port and vessel security briefs, vessel passage plans, threat and risk mitigation and travel risk management.

Working closely in conjunction with a host of experts, MAST Intelligence offers a market leading service pertaining to all maritime affairs.

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Gulf of Guinea

Nigeria's Daily Trust reported on April 19th that NIMASA is to receive a \$2.4 million donation from Japan to boost the country's Deep Blue maritime security project, which has already received around \$190 million. The paper further reported that South Korea has donated a warship to the programme.

Incidents:

1. Two robbers in a fishing boat approached and boarded anchored Liberia-flagged bulk carrier during heavy rain at 0345 UTC in position 04:53.9N – 001:40.9W, Takoradi Anchorage, Ghana. They broke into the forward store and stole ship's stores. The duty crew on rounds noticed the robbers, and informed the officer on watch who raised the general alarm and sounded the ship's horn. Crew mustered. Hearing the alerted crew the robbers escaped. Port control informed. A patrol boat was sent to the location. Reported (IMB) 13th Apr.

Nigerian Navy seizes vessels in illegal refinery push

Business Day reported on April 18th that the Nigerian Navy, as part of Operation Dakatar Da Barawo, had made a number of arrests and seizures in the past two weeks as it attempts to combat oil theft and illegal refineries in the Niger Delta. Among the arrests include nine, large Cotonou wooden boats laden with illegal refined product. Storage sites and refineries were also targeted during the operation, which saw large amounts of product recovered. A number of arrests have been made, but the scale of seizures also illustrates the sheer size of the problem facing the country.

US signs to deal to supply Nigeria with attack helicopters

The US has approved a \$997 million deal to sell Cobra attack helicopters to Nigeria, Stars and Stripes reported on April 14th. As part of the deal, training will be conducted to ensure that the advanced weapons systems delivered with the helicopters are used in a way that is "legally compliant" with international law, the US State Dept. said.

Nigeria looks to expand maritime territory

Blueprint reported on April 14th that Nigeria's efforts to expand its maritime territory are a step closer to fruition. They reported that President Buhari hopes to increase the country's maritime footprint under UNCLOS, and he has initiated the Presidential Committee on Nigeria's Extended Continental Shelf Project to pursue the project.

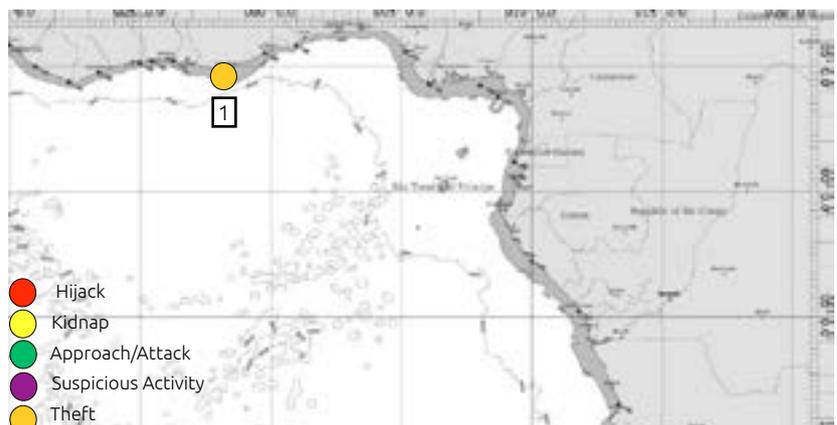
For further information, please [click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

2022
Incidents reported: 15 (MDAT-GoG/Others)

2021
Incidents reported: 56 (MDAT-GoG/Others)
Crew kidnapped: 46 (IMB, MDAT)
Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)

2020
Incidents reported: 132 (MDAT-GoG)
43 Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)



Indian Ocean Region

The Deccan Herald reported on April 14th that the US and India recently held the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue. Part of the focus was maritime security in the Indian Ocean. "Navies have been a driving force in advancing the United States and India's shared interests in the Indian Ocean Region and the wider Indo-Pacific."

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Iran navy to open maritime security centre in near future

Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said the navy will open a maritime security centre in the near future. Speaking during an interview with Iranian national radio, Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said that the Persian Gulf region is controlled by the IRGC naval forces while the Iranian Army navy is in charge of the security of waters in the Sea of Oman and the north of the Indian Ocean region. The Navy Commander stated that the Navy's strategy is to monitor and fully assess all those entering the Sea of Oman through the Strait of Hormuz, adding that "In this area, if we encounter a suspicious case, we will definitely deal with it."

New International Naval Task Force to Enhance Red Sea Security

The Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) established a new international naval task force April 17 to enhance maritime security in the Red Sea region. As CMF's fourth task force, CTF 153 will focus on international maritime security and capacity-building efforts in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb and Gulf of Aden. The task force staff will include as many as 15 U.S. and international military personnel from CMF member-nations. The staff is currently embarked aboard amphibious command ship USS Mount

Whitney (LCC 20) operating in regional waters. When not at sea, CTF 153 personnel will work from offices ashore at CMF headquarters in Manama, Bahrain, the CMF said on April 17th.

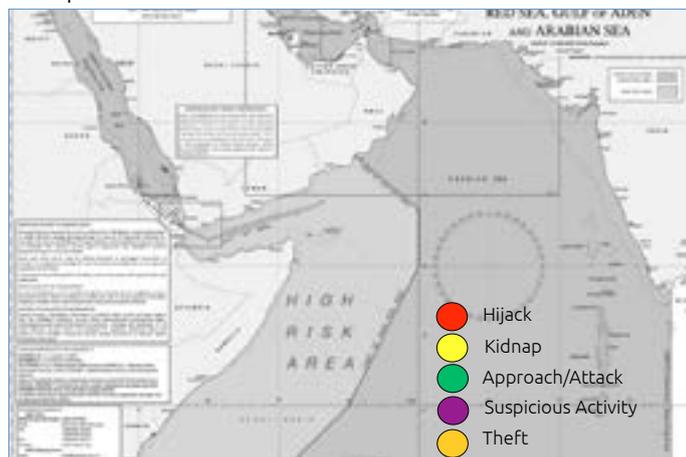
Flight Test Successful for IRGC's Gaza Drone

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps' new wide-body drone passed its flight test in recent days, allowing for the shipment of payloads weighing half a ton. The new heavy Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), named Gaza, has come into operation after successful flight tests. Capable of carrying 13 bombs, Gaza can reach a velocity of 350 kilometres per hour, Iran's Tasnim News reported on April 18th.

Oligarch's yacht warns of armed security presence via AIS

Bloomberg reported on April 15th that a \$65 million superyacht which has been linked with Russian oligarch, Oleg Deripaska, recently transited from the Indian Ocean through the Suez Canal. During the trip, it broadcast a warning via AIS that armed security guards were present on board. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the levying of sanctions, a number of superyachts have been seized globally.

For further information, please click here.



MAST Note: This chart will be replaced as soon as Admiralty UK releases the updated version.

European Waters

The UK is to spend £157 million on its deal to relocate migrants deemed to have entered the country illegally to Rwanda, VOA reported on April 14th. Under the controversial plan, migrants sent to Rwanda who are successful in their asylum claims will be resettled in Rwanda.

Black Sea incidents

In a significant blow to both morale and its Navy, Russia has lost the Black Sea Fleet flagship, the Moskva. It was widely reported on Wednesday 13th that the ship was on fire, following what the Russian Federation called a fire. However, Ukraine claims that it struck the ship with two Neptune anti-ship missiles and photo evidence of the ship before she sank would appear to confirm that it had been hit by at least one projectile. Russia had reported that it was attempting to tow the ship back to Sevastopol, but later admitted that it had sunk. It is not known how many crew were lost during the incident, but The Guardian reported on April 18th that the families of crew members were beginning to break their silence to demand answers from the Russian government; so far, the death toll remains a state secret, they report. The vessel had a crew complement of 510. Turkey has refused to allow foreign minesweeping vessels into its waters to search for detached naval mines, TeleSur reported on April 18th. Despite the risk posed, Turkish Defence Minister, Hulusi Akar, told the media that it was important that the balance around the Black Sea is 'not disturbed'. In recent days, the US embassies in Bulgaria and Georgia have issued alerts warning shipping of the risk of mines in the region. USNI reported on Monday 18th that the Russian Navy could land more of its marines near the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, which remains contested nearly two months into Moscow's invasion, according to a senior US defence official. Reports from the Ukrainian military suggest Russia, which has failed to take the port city of Mariupol 54 days into its invasion of Ukraine, might use landing ships to bring in reinforcements, the defence official said. The Pentagon could not independently verify the claims but also could not deny them.

More than 6,000 migrants have crossed Channel to UK in small boats this year

The Independent reported on April 17th that over 6,000 people had been rescued in the English Channel and brought ashore so far in 2022. Citing

Ministry of Defence sources, they said that a further 181 people crossed to the UK in six small boats on Good Friday, with good weather playing a factor and further crossing attempts expected.

Royal Navy assumes Border Force duties in the English Channel

The UK Royal Navy is to take over operational command in the English Channel and replace Border Force in its efforts to stop small boats from crossing, Merco Press reported on April 16th. British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, said: "To identify, intercept and investigate these boats, from today the Royal Navy will take over operational command from Border Force in the Channel, taking primacy for our operational response at sea in line with many of our international partners with the aim that no boat makes it to the UK undetected."

UN: At least 35 presumed dead after boat capsizes off Libya coast

Al Jazeera reported on April 16th that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had stated that at least 35 people were presumed dead after their vessel capsized off the coast of Libya. The incident took place off notorious trafficking hub, Sabratha, they said. Six bodies were recovered from the sea and a further 29 were missing, presumed dead, the IOM said.

Dangerous migrant sea crossings to Italy doubled in 2021, report says

The New Arab said on April 15th that over 67,000 migrants crossed to Italy by sea in 2021, almost twice the number who crossed in the previous year. The number of minors crossing alone also increased, by some 102 per cent, the paper said.

For further information, please [click here](#).

Somalia & Yemen

Despite denying claims on social media last week that they were planning to target Somalia's President and Prime Minister, Al Shabaab has claimed a mortar attack on Monday 18th on Somalia's parliament, as newly-elected lawmakers met for only the second time, France 24 reported the same day.

New Members of Somalia's Parliament Sworn In

More than 80% of Somalia's new parliament members were sworn in on Thursday 14th, following repeated poll delays and an ongoing feud between the president and the prime minister, VOA reported on April 14th. The chairperson of the Somali Federal Election Committee, Muse Guelleh Yusuf, hailed the event, held at the heavily guarded Mogadishu airport compound, as "a major breakthrough in the Somali electoral process." Elections for lower and upper house lawmakers were scheduled to be completed before President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed's term expired in February 2021. But the elections dragged on, delayed by political and electoral disputes at both the regional and national levels.

Somalia is one step closer to electing new president

Although there are still some 31 seats to be decided for Somalia's parliament, when the freshly-elected lawmakers met on Saturday for the first time, it signalled that the country was nearing the process to select a new President, Africa News reported on April 17th. President Mohamed, better known as Farmajo has already tried to extend his tenure using a decree, but this led to violent protests in the capital, Mogadishu, and criticism from foreign governments and donors.

UN to spend \$100 million to fight hunger as Ukraine conflict disrupts food markets

The United Nations is rushing US\$100 million of aid to hunger hotspots in Africa and the Middle East as the spillover effects of the Ukrainian conflict threaten to drive millions even closer to famine. The UN humanitarian chief, Martin Griffiths, today allocated \$100 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to relief projects in six African countries and Yemen, ReliefWeb said on April 14th. The new funding will support humanitarian operations, with \$30 million for the Horn of Africa divided between Somalia (\$14 million), Ethiopia

(\$12 million) and Kenya (\$4 million). The remaining allocations are as follows: Yemen (\$20 million), Sudan (\$20 million), South Sudan (\$15 million) and Nigeria (\$15 million).

Yemen: New Houthi commitment 'encouraging step' to protecting children

The United Nations has reacted with approval to a new Action Plan signed by Houthi rebels in Yemen which is hoped will safeguard children in the country who have been affected by the conflict, they reported on April 18th. "The United Nations welcomes efforts by all parties to the conflict to end and prevent grave violations against children and this new commitment by the Houthis is a positive and encouraging step in that direction," said UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) Virginia Gamba.

Yemen's Houthis Slam US Naval Patrol Plan in Red Sea

The US seeks to prolong the state of brutal siege and aggression against Yemen with its plan to launch naval patrol in the Red Sea, a spokesman for the Houthi movement said. Mohammed Abdulsalam, who is also the resistance movement's chief negotiator, made the remarks in an Arabic-language post on his Twitter handle late on Friday 15th. One aim of the patrols is to further cut down on illegal weapons shipments to Yemen.

Yemen: 'Light at the end of the tunnel'

The two-month truce brokered by the UN, between Houthis and the Saudi coalition fighting in Yemen is holding, Special Envoy Hans Grundberg told the UN on April 14th. While this is the first truce to cover the entire country in six years, it is still not peace, and Grundberg noted that "continued commitment" is needed from all parties involved to ensure that this becomes a turning point in the long conflict.

For further information, please [click here](#).

UK Security News

The National reported concerning news on April 18th that UK airports are set to reduce security process checks on new staff, in an attempt to ease personnel shortages which have led to lengthy delays at UK airports in recent weeks. It reported that the UK government is to allow unvetted staff to train at airport facilities shortly.

Londonderry: Five Terrorism Act arrests at parade

Five men have been arrested under the Terrorism Act following an Easter parade linked to dissident republicans in Londonderry on Monday. The men are aged 29, 38, 40, 50 and 54. Police were also attacked with petrol bombs during their operation at the City Cemetery, BBC News said on April 18th.

Commonwealth Games: Drones and dogs part of security plans

Private drone operators face a ban during the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, as West Midlands Police mounts the biggest operation in its history. The force said it would have more than 3,000 officers involved, when the Games take place from 28 July to 7 August. One hundred employees have been planning since 2017 and 55 police dogs are being deployed. Drones are part of the security operation, but there will be a strict ban for private operators, the BBC reported on April 19th.

Police anti-terror IT system was 'not fit for purpose', says former officer

The BBC's Newsnight programme reported on April 14th that a key intelligence database used by police to assist in investigations into extremists was "not fit for purpose" when it was brought online in 2014, according to a former counter-terror officer. The officer, who retired in 2018, says the National Common Intelligence Application (NCIA) had serious flaws. Counter Terrorism Policing says "substantial improvements" were made following a significant review after terror attacks in 2017, including at the Manchester Arena.

UK court sentences Islamic State follower to life imprisonment for murdering MP

Ali Harbi Ali, a follower of ISIS, has been sentenced to life imprisonment for engaging in terror activities and for the murder of UK MP, David Amess, Jurist reported on April 15th. The court sentenced Ali for

two crimes; engaging in the preparation of terrorist acts between May 1st, 2019 and September 28th 2021, and the murder of David Amess. The whole life sentence was imposed as his crimes were committed for the purposes of terrorism.

London News

Boxer Amir Khan robbed at gunpoint in east London for £71k watch

The Evening Standard reported on April 19th that boxer, Amir Khan, had been robbed at gunpoint outside a restaurant in London on Monday night. Khan, who had been out with his wife at the time, said that two men ran towards him and pointed a firearm at him, before snatching his watch – a Franck Muller Vanguard Chronograph worth £71,000 – from him and escaping. Police conducted a search but the suspects had fled, the paper reported.

Horse Guards Parade: Man accused of police confrontation

A man has appeared in court accused of confronting police at Horse Guards Parade in central London. Two Ministry of Defence police officers were approached by a man with a knife on Monday 18th at the historic area in Westminster, central London. Prashanth Kandaiah, 29, of Thamesmead, appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court charged with attempting to cause grievous bodily harm (GBH). He was also charged with possession of a knife, BBC News reported on April 19th.

For further information, please [click here](#).

Global Security News

Australia, New Zealand and the US have raised concerns on security in the Pacific, after China signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands. The deal was signed this week, fuelling fears China may seek to build a naval base in the Pacific nation, the BBC reported on April 20th.

Ukraine: Latest updates

BBC News reported on April 20th that Russia had given Ukrainian defenders in the besieged port city of Mariupol a new ultimatum to surrender. The men are dug in at the large steel working Azovstal complex in the city. It is believed that around 100,000 civilians are trapped in the city, where vital supplies are almost gone. Ukraine hopes to evacuate 6,000 civilians from the city in a bus convoy, but it hinges on Russia agreeing to a safe corridor. In previous attempts, Russian forces are reported to have fired on civilians trying to escape the city. Russia has begun to focus on eastern Ukraine, and have created a 300 mile frontline, as fighting in the Donbas region intensifies. Ukraine has launched its own counter-attacks, and has taken the town of Maryinka, near Donetsk. The UK Ministry of Defence reports that Ukraine has repelled numerous attempted advances by Russian forces, who are still struggling with logistical and environmental challenges.

The International Atomic Energy Agency reported on April 20th that direct communication has now been re-established with Chernobyl nuclear power plant, where Russian forces had remained until March 31st. A team of experts is expected to visit the plant this month to assess its condition.

Western nations continue to pledge military and financial support to Ukraine, with the US expected to send a further aid package to the country, on top of the \$2.6 billion in security aid sent since the Russian invasion began in February. UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has said that the UK plans to send the country Brimstone anti-ship missiles. Designed to be launched by fast jets, there are hopes that the systems can be adapted to be fired from 'technicals', the pick up trucks favoured by militia forces in Somalia and other African nations.

Libya oil production hit amid worsening protests

Libya's National Oil Corporation says that a wave of protests affecting the energy sector are likely to get

worse. At least four separate groups have stopped production at oil fields and energy facilities across the country. The protesters want Libya's Tripoli-based Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah to hand power to a rival government led by Fathi Bashagha which was formed last month, BBC News reported on April 19th.

Mali gets more military equipment from Russia

BBC News reported on April 19th that Mali has received another batch of military equipment from Russia after the European Union suspended its military training programme with the Sahel nation. Mali's armed forces chief, Maj Gen Oumar Diarra, received two combat helicopters and surveillance radars, the Malian presidency said in a statement.

Industry and SIA News

3D security concept:

How LiDAR and Other Sensors Enable Security in 3D

The SIA takes a look at how the use of LiDAR can aid security planning by creating detailed, 3D maps of environments where security needs to be applied. The systems can assist planners in the security industry by delivering real-time 3D data and superior intruder detection in an intuitive way.

To read the entire article, please [click here](#).

For further information, [please click here](#).



Tel: +44 (0) 1279 216 726

Address: Thremhall Park, Start Hill, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM22
7WE

Email: operations@mast-security.co.uk